

SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING NOVEMBER 14, 2001

The Program Policy and Structure Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Wednesday, November 14, 2001 at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). The meeting was led by its chair, Dr. Kenneth Jackson of the New York State Department of Health. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. The purpose of the meeting was to address the agenda items as follow.

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Jackson called the meeting to order and took attendance.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes from the teleconference held on October 31, 2001 were reviewed and approved as written.. The action items were updated.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Dr. Kenneth Jackson summarized the background of the structuring of NELAC and the current situation in which the Office of General Council has found NELAC to be out of compliance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Hence, three options have been proposed by EPA, which Dr. Jackson then reviewed, listing their advantages and disadvantages:

- Expansion of ELAB to include several subcommittees to develop standards;
- Restricted membership in NELAC which excludes the private sector; and
- Shifting the entire NELAC structure into the private sector.

Dr. Jackson then introduced his "4th potential solution" which involves establishing NELAC as an organization independent of EPA. In this instance, the non-profit Institute for National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation (INLEA) would assume many roles currently held by EPA. This process will take approximately two years to establish. However, the latest word from the Office of General Council is that NELAC has to be put into compliance immediately, not in two years. Dr. Jackson has recommended that as an interim solution, two bodies be developed: NELAC to continue in its current role as a standards setting body, but without private sector participation; and INLEA as a standards development body, with full private sector involvement including voting rights. It is likely that this issue will be discussed at the Strategic Planning Session, which is scheduled to be held the weekend prior to the Interim Meeting. Discussion ensued.

Dr. Jackson recommended that work on revising the Constitution and Bylaws begin after the Interim Meeting.

FIELDS OF ACCREDITATION TABLES

Dr. Jackson had nothing to report at this time; however, he will have the full set for the next teleconference.

DATA INTEGRITY PROGRAM

Art Burton reviewed the new paragraph he added to 1.8.3 of Chapter 1. The main factor in this paragraph is that all staff participate in ethics training, not just top level. It was agreed that this paragraph is well written. Mr. Burton is now ready to send the proposed wording for Chapter 5 to Quality Systems for their consideration. Consensus was that this request come from the ACIL and the Data Integrity Task Force, with support from this Committee. Mr. Burton will draft a memo to Fred Siegelman and send to members for comments and input. Dr. Jackson will send a memo on behalf of this Committee in support of this proposed language. If this is approved by Quality Systems for incorporation into their Chapter 5, the new paragraph in 1.8.3 will be added to Chapter 1 concurrently.

FUTURE TELECONFERENCES

The next teleconference is scheduled for November 28, 2001, at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon EST.

**ACTION ITEMS
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
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Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	Dr. Jackson will work on the remaining Fields of Accreditation tables to present at the next teleconference.	11/28/01
2.	Mr. Burton will e-mail the Data Integrity document and a memo to Fred Siegelman, and copy the Committee.	ASAP
3.	Dr. Jackson to follow up with Dr. Siegelman and verify this Committee's support of these changes to Chapter 5.	ASAP

PARTICIPANTS
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
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